



## Renaissance of Accra

Our due rights and privileges as free women and men across the various provinces of Ghana arguably remain limited within our current democratic framework. There is an ever-widening gap of rhetoric and reality between the officially sanctioned lines of local authority within public institutions and the influence of informal networks on our political silhouette.

Resident-citizens of Accra deserve the freewill to ascertain objectives as an organised district, prioritise socioeconomic and cultural issues on the basis of consensus and instruct the relevant provinces to construct — the Republic, mirroring the ideals of a freely participating citizenry, being the architect and the provinces her contractors. Hence, Ghanaian citizens deserve to scrutinise at regular open District Assembly summonses, the allocation and management of such resources in achieving district objectives, as well updating the Assembly concerning the ongoing modern wants of society. Thus, maximising the contribution of both civil and, or, entrepreneurial citizens to nation building even in the remotest of the interior whether formally educated or illiterate.

This puts an end to a system of governance which absolves government from accountability to the citizenry. Indeed, this is the future of an all-inclusive and vibrant democratic fraternity. In this age of technology, with households latched onto social media, magazines and other news-gathering resources, it has become much easier to enhance civic participation. The Executive must imperatively yield power to a greater proportion of the citizenry by conducting elections for the Mayor of Accra and district councillors, on the basis of common suffrage, for all City residents.

Perhaps, a monumental post-partisan movement, or the emergence of a movement outside the initiative of the conventional parties dominating the 4th Republic would reveal itself and symbolise a switch towards the politics of the future.

The Mayor of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly is expected, above all, to preserve the peace of the City; oversee the effective

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administration of civil and criminal justice; advocate a constitutional review for the enactment of laws which exclusively apply to Accra; promote free enterprise and raise the streams of revenue to support The Republic.

We must also consider the prospect of the AMA as a legation/foreign mission, which could also serve as trading posts, stationed in various commercial cities throughout the Universe and outlining a progressive Metropolitan Foreign Policy for development — prioritising the long-term financial welfare of the metropolis yet retaining reasonable flexibility in the face of unforeseeable global events. Since our political aspirations must transcend beyond our boundaries, this is an opportunity to emphasise Ghanaian exceptionalism and, especially, to project Accra as a lucrative global city with a unique personality of its own by marketing domestic goods and services — targeting Africa and the Caribbean.

The establishment of a Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce could also serve as an effective channel of communication with influential free market stakeholders of the Republic to initiate dialogue on economic policies affecting the metropolis — such as the provision of offshore financial services — and confer on viable measures. This is part of an effort to modernise the City as a premier fin-tech and commercial hub for international trade, arts and culture.

Indeed, this is an avenue through which we can boost the exports our technical expertise; culture and even our secondary products en masse to untapped free markets such as São Tomé and Príncipe, Haiti, Barbados, San Domingo, Saint Lucia, etc. The Republic is also better positioned to develop her own sphere of influence by uniting a bloc of nations and providing global leadership through commerce, culture and military cooperation.

As no civilisation can triumph without the grace of nature, it is only imperative that the City is adorned in her natural-state and her construction engineered in accordance with the intrinsic features of our environment. We must dare to challenge the status quo with pragmatic eco-friendly alternatives. Pioneering innovative and intellectually challenging agricultural competitions, with enticing rewards of capital investment and world-class technical assistance, could further act as a catalyst for domestic farming and other horticulturist enterprises. An opportunity to bridge the expertise between technological innovation and indigenous entrepreneurship, this as a major step towards ecological balance in the Capital.

Open-air spaces, such as the Kinbu Gardens near the Barnes road, could be remodelled to serve as green fee-free parks of recuperation for our industrious citizens as part of an effort to cluster our tropical metropolis with palm trees and fragrant flowerbeds. Also, the multiple fortresses constructed on Ghana's coast over centuries and gained through conquest, as well deteriorating public assets, possess immense potential for modernisation as commercial and social enterprises — such as museums; centres of scholarships; public libraries and hotels.

In my view, an ideal City Cabinet of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly should consist of a Mayor, Prime Councillor & City Diplomat; Deputy Mayor for Finance and Commerce; Deputy Mayor for Foreign Relations; City Exchequer; non-executive Traditional Representative of the National House of Chiefs; City Attorney; City Comptroller and Solicitor; City Prosecutor; City Chief Clerk; City Chief Architect; City Environmentalist; City Intelligence Chief; City Press Commissioner & Linguist and City Cultural Ambassador to head metropolitan departments. The Inclusion of non-executive representation for minority groups, such as physically challenged persons, on Councils is also a matter of keen interest and an option which should be explored.

The strength of the local government is dependent on the patronage it receives from us citizens. It is my hope that our sacred tricoloured national flag lures the most skilful citizens to serve and sacrifice in honour of this sovereign nation.

I wish to take this opportunity to wish my fellow citizens of Ghana, both at home and overseas, a happy Independence Day. May God bless our beloved motherland, long live The Republic!

**V. L. K. Djokoto**